

STATEMENT OF
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON SURFACE TRANSPORTATION
AND MERCHANT MARINE
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
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Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you on this critical topic of concern for our entire Nation. I want to express my appreciation to the members of this committee for their interest and to share with them my sincere sympathy for the families and friends of the victims of the tragedy of September 11th. The possibilities we now face are driven by a deliberate attack that most could not have imagined prior to September 11th. The Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) has worked diligently to respond to the events of September 11 and prepare for our new reality concerning public safety and security.

The RSPA mission has always been focused on public safety. RSPA administers a comprehensive, national series of programs through the offices of pipeline safety, transportation of hazardous materials and the office of emergency transportation. Our job is to protect people, property and the environment from harm or damage that would result from accidents or events resulting from the transportation of hazardous materials, from damage by oil or natural gas pipelines and respond to emergency transportation issues resulting from natural or manmade events.

Our safety programs traditionally focus on the likelihood of “accidental” events in order to minimize the consequences when incidents occur. Fortunately, RSPA has also proactively addressed security concerns for all areas under our jurisdiction.

In less than 30 minutes after the first attack on the World Trade Center, Transportation Secretary Mineta ordered the activation of the Crisis Management Center (CMC) which is part of RSPA’s Office of Emergency Transportation. The CMC is an inter-modal communication center that is in direct communication with regional emergency responders to acquire, assess and analyze emergency communication and response activities in support of the Secretary. The CMC includes representatives from all 9 transportation modes, including Federal Aviation, Transit, Highways, Rail, Maritime, Motor Carriers, Pipelines, and Coast Guard, as well as general counsel, public affairs and intelligence/security functions. We gathered information in “real time” via our AIM (Activation Information Management System) reporting system and created immediate hourly (sometimes more often) situational reports for the Secretary. The CMC was immediately manned on a 24/7 basis and has remained fully operational since September 11th.

In addition, the Office of Emergency Transportation immediately responded to support ESF-1 (Emergency Support Function under the Federal Response Plan) activities with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and coordinated, facilitated and provided,

when necessary, all transportation support for FEMA. This included movement of the urban search and rescue teams and other personnel, equipment, supplies, including blood and provisions, to the New York City and Pentagon sites. Lastly, this office directly supported individual activities of the Coast Guard and Federal Aviation Administration.

On September 11th, RSPA's Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) immediately issued a security bulletin to over 1000 pipeline owner/operators. OPS personnel made immediate and individual telephone contact with all major pipeline operators to ensure that communication was open and viable between our offices and that they understood and adhered to the security issues. Additionally, OPS personnel contacted all of the State pipeline safety programs to provide them with security information. On September 14, RSPA's Office of Pipeline Safety amended the security bulletin and requested that the operators continue to strengthen their security efforts and that emergency security measures remain in place until further notice. RSPA is pro-actively working with the pipeline industry to increase security awareness and individual measures and continues to be in close and immediate communication with pipeline owner/operators.

Responding to the increased level of transportation security, RSPA's Office of Hazardous Materials Safety, in coordination with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, issued a hazardous materials safety alert to ensure that adequate security measures are in place when transporting hazardous materials. This alert was distributed

throughout the hazardous materials transportation community, manufacturing industries and State and local governments. The office also established an intermodal working group composed of representatives from several of the Department's operating administrations. The working group is conducting a multi-modal assessment of the existing security measures in place for the transportation of hazardous materials by all modes to see which ones may need to be strengthened or revised.

Lastly, RSPA is focused on risk and vulnerability assessment, identifying current procedures and authorities and determining necessary improvements, refinements and response to public security and safety issues. We are reviewing all current regulatory and administrative tools that can be utilized to support increased security responsibilities, have issued a Broad Agency Announcement for Research and Development of Transportation Infrastructure Security Technologies and are an integral participant in the Department's intermodal National Infrastructure Security Committee. The Volpe Transportation Center, a key member of the RSPA team, is an acknowledged leader in transportation security analysis and programs. The Volpe Center has a leadership role in developing programs related to physical security issues for the Federal Transit Administration, the Bureau of Printing and Engraving and the U.S. Capitol Police prior to and in concurrence with the events of September 11th. The Transportation Safety Institute in Oklahoma City has been developing critical safety education and training programs for multimodal application and is specifically reviewing all programs to support security issues.

These are just a few highlights of what the Research and Special Programs Administration has been doing since the September 11th terrorist attack on America. Many of our daily activities in promoting the public safety have not changed since September 11th. With 2.1 million miles of pipeline and over 800,000 shipments of hazardous material every day, equaling four billion tons annually, RSPA's role in promulgating rules and regulations concerning pipeline safety and the packaging and shipping of hazmat materials is critical. It must be noted, that from a security perspective, many of the shipments classified as hazardous materials may be as innocent as paint or aerosol containers. However, for those materials which would provide for a harmful platform, RSPA works closely to ensure that hazardous material shipments are identified, labeled and packaged for shipment in a safe manner. For instance, we share regulation of nuclear materials transportation with the Department of Energy. We work with the Federal Aviation Administration to develop measures to keep hazardous materials out of passenger aircraft. We cooperate with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration on the development of minimum requirements for commercial drivers licenses and drivers authorized to transport hazardous materials. However, RSPA is not responsible for issuing commercial drivers licenses. This is a function of the individual states in adherence to Federal Motor Carriers rules.

My personal commitment and that of each RSPA employee is to the safety and security of the American public. RSPA continues to evaluate and implement additional measures and will continue to work with the pipeline, hazardous material and emergency transportation

communities towards those mutual goals. We offer our full support to this sub-committee and the Committee as a whole and we thank you again for the opportunity to meet with you today and respond to your questions, concerns or comments.